

**ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION**

**DOCKET NO. 06-0706**

**DIRECT TESTIMONY**

**OF**

**KATIE TROCCOLI**

**SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF**

**KATIE TROCCOLI**

**December 2009**

1 My name is Katie Troccoli (Kathryn L. Troccoli). I reside at 1911 Champlain St., Ottawa, IL. I am a lifelong  
2 resident of Champlain St., Ottawa, IL where I grew up on my Father's land working in the family  
3 greenhouse/flower business. I am a licensed Illinois Real Estate Managing Broker. I began my real estate  
4 career in 1984 as a sales person opening my own company Washington Square Realtors Inc. in 1997.  
5 Having been active in the list and sale of real estate as a top producer since the beginning of my 25 year  
6 career, I have been active in the Illini Valley Association of Realtors serving on various committees. I am  
7 the current President of the Association.

8 On April 6, 2006 I attended a meeting at Shepherd Grade School in Ottawa, IL where Ameren IP  
9 employees presented three proposed routes for transmission lines to be sighted. The Ameren  
10 representatives told me that I had nothing to be concerned about. The alternate routes going past my  
11 home on Champlain St., or behind me on the railroad would be very expensive and difficult for Ameren.  
12 They said they were sure the primary route/preferred route would be selected. I took their advice and  
13 did not concern myself any further. I felt the gentleman was very confident in what he said.

14 I received a Registered letter from Ameren IP dated April 15, 2009 seeking to negotiate an easement  
15 across my front yard on Champlain St., my mother, both my sisters (one of which has sold her lot to my  
16 son (who did not get notice) received a similar registered letter).

17 After the registered letters arrived I was bombarded at my office by people who were upset at getting  
18 their letters from Ameren, then by those who found out they got no notice, but would be affected  
19 because the route would be across the street from them, or would be affected in some manner.

20 I have a history of doing environmental and consumer related non profit work. I am angry that I was  
21 misled by Ameren at our first meeting, and that I have to deal with yet another issue when good  
22 common sense has been ignored by people who are supposed to know what they are doing.

23 Community concerns range from EMF's (Electro Magnetic Fields) and health concerns to aesthetics and  
24 property values. Here is where the concerns collide.

25 The Oxford University Study published in the British Medical Journal looked at cancer data in England  
26 and Wales between 1962 and 1995, for children aged up to 15 years old. The study found that children  
27 whose birth address was within 200 meters of an overhead power line had a 70% increased risk of  
28 leukemia. The study, which was partially funded by the power - line industry, mapped how far each child  
29 lived from a **high voltage overhead power line**. It compared the children who had cancer with a control  
30 group of 29,000 children without cancer, but who lived in comparable districts. The study concludes  
31 there is a statistical link between EMF from power lines and leukemia.

32 When I work with a client who is looking to purchase a home I send them all the information on  
33 properties which are in the community of their choice, price range, and meet their bed/bathroom  
34 requirements. They pick out the properties they want to see. I then set appointments for the properties  
35 and we look together at the physical characteristics. I am non judgmental of their lifestyle naturally, but  
36 also as required by law. People are very different in many ways. One thing remains the same. They want  
37 their family to be safe, secure, and happy. They want their investment to be sound. The purchase of a  
38 home is often the largest financial transaction they ever make. Emotion runs high in the field of real  
39 estate. Home purchases are often dictated by emotion rather than business logic. The connotation of a  
40 health hazard or potential physical adversity will push them away from a property or even a community.

41 I recently had a conversation with three of my colleagues (Judie McConnville, Theresa Poundstone, and  
42 Ellen Mueller) while attending a "meet and greet" for a local company relocating employees to the city  
43 of Ottawa, IL. The subject of the Ameren Transmission lines came up. I commented that I was worried  
44 about the value of my home should Ameren put a 105 foot tall pole in my yard and transmission line

45 down my street. One agent, Theresa Poundstone said "You should be concerned. Your property will  
46 become un-saleable." The other agents agreed.

47 The written offer from Ameren of \$1.62 per square foot for an easement is absurd. The people who live  
48 on the East side of Champlain St. don't even get that consideration. An Ameren transmission line going  
49 through Ottawa and up Champlain St. will devastate the home investment (the largest investment of  
50 most in their life time) of the many property owners it will affect. The community of Dayton will cease to  
51 exist as we know it. The easement Ameren proposes on my property comes well into my personal space.  
52 When they pull their truck into my yard to work on their lines I will be able to reach out my window and  
53 touch them. I am not amused.

54 For me, this is like losing the family farm. My Father Robert H. Dumke, a three combat jump paratrooper  
55 in WWII, purchased the property to operate a greenhouse and florist shop after the war. I grew up  
56 working with my parents and siblings in the family business. My father, having seen more than any  
57 person should see in the war, wanted each of his children to have a home and security. He knew how  
58 difficult it would be for us to save the 20% down payment we would need to purchase a home. He  
59 subdivided his land and provided each of us our inheritance while he was still alive. My sister Twila, and I  
60 both built homes. I purchased my brother Frank's lot. My son purchased my sister Barb's lot. My  
61 daughter purchased the home across the street (She has never been notified of anything by Ameren).  
62 We planted roots here.

63 Having lived at the Champlain Street location all of my life I must mention Ottawa Regional Hospital  
64 being just across the Fox River from us. The almost daily medical evacuation helicopters who sometimes  
65 make us feel like we live at a Mash unit in a combat zone they fly so low. I have seen the lights of the  
66 helicopter from my bedroom window at night as I lay down to go to sleep. They fly so low sometimes I  
67 think they are going to land on my roof. Many a prayer I have said for the patient, pilot, and crew.

68 A few years ago my husband and I were the first persons on the scene of a horrific roll over accident.  
69 Two of the six teen age occupants died. It took 30 minutes for the first responders to arrive at the scene.  
70 I felt I had stepped into a war zone. Not that long ago there was a helicopter crash near Aurora in the  
71 news. The medical evacuation helicopter was air lifting a seriously ill child. The helicopter hit a tower  
72 and everyone in the helicopter died. My gut tells me the same thing will happen in my yard or on my  
73 street if the transmission lines and poles are located on Champlain Street. Having had firsthand  
74 experience with tragedy, I cannot in good conscience sit by and allow the sighting of transmission lines  
75 and towers in the flight path of the medical evacuation helicopters at Ottawa Regional Hospital without  
76 strong objection. (I have photo documentation of medical evacuation helicopters taken from my front  
77 porch. Not an easy task as they fly low and fast.) My own family members have been transported from  
78 this location on several occasions.

79 I indicated earlier that I had been active in environment and consumer issues. Actually they are  
80 community issues. I can honestly say my community is a better place because of my actions and of the  
81 actions of those who I have stood with. Ottawa would have been the sight of a (Pioneer Processing)  
82 hazardous waste landfill. I believe our drinking water would have been contaminated. The Super Fund  
83 (Radium Dial / Luminous Process) radioactive contamination cleanup may never have begun in Ottawa.  
84 LaSalle County may never have had a health department. Sheridan would have a hazardous waste  
85 incinerator. Marseilles/Seneca would have a mega landfill. Hazardous waste would be being burned in  
86 the cement kiln at Illinois Cement in LaSalle, IL. Plum Island in the Illinois River at Starved Rock State Park  
87 (a winter roost of the bald eagle) would not be a wildlife refuge owned by the Illinois Audubon Society.  
88 Just a few of the projects I have worked on. Our system of government does work most of the time.  
89 However, I have grown tired and irritable with the constant battle.

90 Which brings me to winter roosting bald eagles and wildlife. When I was growing up on Champlain St. I  
91 never remember seeing bald eagles, blue heron, egret, or osprey. The wooded river bank between

Ottawa and Wedron is now a haven for these birds. I see them often along Champlain St and near the Fox River. The Dayton Dam and the rapids in the river provide the needed winter feeding and the woods on the bank provide the habitat for the birds which not that long ago were nearly extinct. Clear cutting nine miles of trees, 100 foot wide of river bank forest to install Ameren power transmission lines is unconscionable when other options exist. Silting of soil into the river, and herbicide run off will be future problems for Ameren if the current route is selected. (Please see letters of affirmation from qualified individuals which support my statement.)

Quite frankly I am angry. I don't want to constantly be the conscience of the community. Once again here I am. One might understand if I became civil disobedient, given that my home, and community is at stake. God help me if you push me to that point. If it is not enough to protect the poor defenseless birds and animals then one must realize the numerous business in the Ottawa and surrounding communities that thrive on the rugged country wilderness environment we offer in the Fox river valley. Canoeing, backpacking, hunting, fishing, even skydiving. People come from all over the world to visit the area. Tourism is big in our community. Yet in this situation some say who cares about the Fox River, Ottawa and Dayton. To heck with everyone and everything. Who cares about the river, some trees, or local residents' homes. Ameren and industry need these transmission lines or the sky is going to fall in. Hogwash! There are other options available to accommodate the needs of Ameren, industry, and residential needs, for power and transmission lines in the community. Common sense would locate the transmission lines away from populated areas, homes, and environmentally sensitive locations. If the proper due diligence had been done by Ameren we would not be doing this today. Two wrongs never make a right. Take the time and do the right thing.

The Skydive Chicago Airport is in grave danger of closing should these transmission lines be sited on either side of the facility. I grew up with a paratrooper who began sport parachuting when I was 4 years old. I spent a lot of time at an airport near Streator, IL. I once remember my sister who was jumping at

116 age 16 having a terrible mishap involving power lines. The jump master had dropped a wind drift  
117 indicator. By the time my sister exited the airplane the wind direction had changed 180 degrees. She  
118 was blown by the wind west into the city, instead of east into the airport drop zone. While she looked  
119 frantically for an alternate landing area her parachute carried her into power lines she did not even see  
120 until her parachute was draped over them. Lucky for her she lived. The wires were smaller voltage and  
121 her light weight of 90 pounds allowed her to escape before a wire ultimately broke which would have  
122 electrocuted her. However, no sport parachutist will survive landing in 138,000 volt transmission lines.

123 In conclusion: The path of the 138,000 volt transmission lines should be away from homes, population,  
124 helicopter flight paths, airports, and environmentally sensitive areas. There are other options for the  
125 transmission lines to be located and should be considered. If the wrong route is taken, the wrong cannot  
126 be reversed. It will continue into perpetuity. Please do the right thing. It is your obligation.